

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-09

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DRAFTED BY NEA:HHSANDERS:HE

APPROVED BY NEA:SSOBER

NEA/ARP - MR. DICKMAN

NEA/P - MR. SHERMAN

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 045186

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E.O. 11652: XGDS-3

TAGS: PFOR, US, SA

SUBJECT:TESTIMONY BEFORE SENATE SUBCOMMITTEE

FOR AMBASSADOR AKINS FROM SAUNDERS

1. YESTERDAY I TESTIFIED BEFORE SENATOR CHURCH'S SFRC SUBCOMMITTEE ON MULTINATIONAL BUSINESS. THE ADVERTISED SUBJECT WAS THE ARAB BOYCOTT, BUT AS YOU KNOW FROM THE PRESS A GREAT DEAL OF ATTENTION HAS BEEN FOCUSED IN THE LAST COUPLE OF DAYS ON THE QUESTION OF RELIGIOUS DISCRIMINATION, PARTICULARLY THE QUESTION OF SAUDI ARABIA'S VISA RESTRICTIONS.

2. I WANT YOU TO KNOW THAT I WAS ASKED WHETHER JEWISH FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICERS EVER GO TO SAUDI ARABIA OR ARE ASSIGNED THERE. I ANSWERED THAT OFFICIALS OF THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH WHO ARE JEWISH NOW GO IN AND OUT OF SAUDI ARABIA
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FREQUENTLY ON BUSINESS. I SAID THAT WE FELT STRONGLY IT

IS BEST TO DEAL WITH THIS SUBJECT THROUGH QUIET DIPLOMACY
AND PERSUASION RATHER THAN BY TAKING THE ISSUE ON FRONTALLY.
I WAS ASKED WHETHER I COULD CITE SPECIFICS THAT WOULD
INDICATE WE HAD MADE PROGRESS IN THIS REGARD. I REPLIED
THAT IT WAS IN THE NATURE OF QUIET DIPLOMACY THAT WE
WOULD NOT WANT TO CITE PUBLICLY SUCH EXAMPLES. WHEN
PRESSED, I EXPRESSED POSITIVELY THE CONVICTION THAT PROGRESS
IS BEING MADE.

3. I FELT THIS WAS THE MINIMUM THAT COULD BE SAID IN GOOD
CONSCIENCE GIVEN THE PUBLIC CONCERN HERE OVER DISCRIMINA-
TION AND OUR GENUINE EFFORTS ON THIS SUBJECT. I WANTED
YOU TO KNOW OF THIS EXCHANGE IN CASE IT COMES BACK TO YOU
IN ANY WAY THROUGH THE SAUDIS. BEST REGARDS. KISSINGER

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